

What You Need to Know About Recycled Water

(SCWA logo)

As water demand increases, the Sonoma County Water Agency strives to make efficient use of our limited supply of fresh water. Together with your local water supplier (see box), we are working to reduce demands on our system by implementing water conservation and recycling programs.

Water recycling not only conserves drinking water, but also actually reduces demand for treated water for irrigation and other uses. Fish and other wildlife benefit when less treated wastewater is discharged into rivers and other water bodies. Recycled water also can be used for wetlands restoration.

What is recycled water?

Recycled water is cleaned wastewater from homes and businesses. Advanced treatment processes are used to remove bacteria and pollutants. Treated wastewater undergoes extensive testing to ensure that it meets strict standards set by the California Department of Health Services.

(Treatment graphic)

How can we use recycled water?

In the U.S., recycled water has been used for more than 40 years to irrigate crops and large landscaped areas such as golf courses, athletic fields, commercial and industrial parks, and cemeteries. More recently, its uses include process water for industry, wildlife habitat enhancement, fountains and more.

Recycled water is transported in your community through a system of purple pipes, completely separate from your drinking water and wastewater systems.

Recycled water in your community

Right now in our area, we are saving more than *five billion* gallons of fresh water each year by using recycled water. You can see recycled water at work in your community, helping to ensure a reliable supply of water by using this precious resource wisely.

Santa Rosa: Parks; golf courses; agricultural land; commercial properties; Geysers Steamfields (under construction)

Petaluma: Part of Adobe Creek Golf Course; 800 acres of agricultural land

Rohnert Park: Extensive use in city parks; landscaping and golf courses; Sonoma State University

Sonoma: Pasture and vineyard irrigation and wetland enhancement

Windsor: Windsor Golf Course; landscaping at Windsor High School and Town Green; residential landscaping at Vintage Greens subdivision

Coming up ...

Sonoma County Water Agency is working with local partners on several recycled water projects in the region.

- The North Sonoma County Agricultural Reuse Feasibility Study will investigate providing recycled water to agricultural users in the Alexander, Dry Creek and Russian River valleys via the City of Santa Rosa's Geysers Pipeline.
- The Santa Rosa Urban Recycled Water Distribution System will provide recycled water for irrigation within the urban areas of the city.
- The Sonoma Valley Recycled Water Project Feasibility Study will investigate expanding the use of recycled water from the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District treatment plant to include urban and agricultural users north of the plant.
- In Petaluma, Rooster Run Golf Course will be the first customer of the city's new recycled water pipeline, scheduled to begin construction in fall 2003. The golf course alone will save more than 100 million gallons of potable water each year.
- Several smaller projects are also under way in Sonoma and Marin counties. For more information, contact the SCWA Public Information Office at (707) 521-6204.

You Need to Know ... How to Take Action

- Watch for purple pipe and become aware of the many uses of recycled water in your community.
- Support and encourage the use of recycled water in your community to irrigate farms and parks and other public areas.
- As the county's recycled water infrastructure is being developed, some large water users may be able to access the recycled water system to irrigate vineyards, crops or landscaping. To find out if recycled water is an option for you, contact your local water supplier or Ken Goddard of SCWA at (707) 521-1892.

Agency Contractors (your local water suppliers)

- City of Santa Rosa 707-543-3985
- City of Petaluma 707-778-4392
- City of Rohnert Park 707-588-3300
- City of Sonoma 707-933-2231
- City of Cotati 707-792-4600
- North Marin Water District 415-897-4133
- Valley of the Moon Water District 707-996-1037
- Forestville Water District 707-887-1551

Other water customers include Marin Municipal Water District (415-945-1455) and the Town of Windsor (707-838-1004)

Sonoma County Water Agency provides water supply, flood control and sanitation services for the County of Sonoma. The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors acts as the Agency's Board of Directors. For more information, please call (707) 526-5370.